

City Council Minutes

May 27, 2003

The Council of the City of Milton-Freewater met in regular session on Tuesday, May 27, 2003 at 7:00 p.m. in the council chambers of City Hall.

The following members were present: Mayor Key, Councilors Saager, Lyon, Woods and Kelley and also Youth Representative Colahan. Staff members present were City Manager Delphine Palmer, Assistant City Manager Linda Hall and Library Director Bob Jones. Citizens present were Curtis Walter, Barbara Walter, Kris Traylor, Chris Wallace and Charlie Good. Councilors Record and Humbert were both out-of-town.

Members of the press present were Jeff Durham of the Blue Mountain Pioneer and Jeannine Koranda of the East Oregonian.

PRESENTATION of Library Volunteer Awards. Library Director Bob Jones presented an honorary pin to show appreciation to the many volunteers that helped move the library contents from the old location to the new facility. Mr. Jones announced that 95 persons had been counted that gave of their time and effort in the City's behalf. Mr. Jones further mentioned that the Umatilla County Corrections group came from Pendleton to help and also a youth group from the Methodist Church in Portland came and helped. With that many people coming and going, Mr. Jones stated it was difficult to be accurate, but had encouraged people to sign in. Mr. Jones said that they finally determined sixteen persons had committed more than fifteen hours each and Mr. Jones presented pins to individuals that said, "Milton-Freewater Public Library. Thanks!"

Those honored were Ray and Dawna Douglas, Judy Piper, Gary and LeeAnn Rizzuti, Darrell Gomsrud, Nancy Wolfe, Norma Kerby, Bonnie Dudgeon, Tina, Evan and Andrew Kain, Barbara Walter, Dick and Joan Knowles, Remy Wilcox and Alyssa Sanders.

PRESENTATION Councilor Saager's donations supporting the Junior Show, Little League Restroom construction, the Skateboard Park and the Summer Reading Program. Councilor Saager motioned council to authorize expenditures from his declined interim Fire Chief salary in the following manner: Junior Show, \$500.00, Little League Restroom construction, \$750.00, Skateboard Park, \$500.00, and the Summer Reading Program, \$250.00. Councilor Lyon seconded the motion. Mayor Key expressed his feelings stating this was a tremendous effort on the part of Councilor Saager. The motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS: Items on the consent calendar included minutes from the April 28, 2003 meeting. Councilor Kelley moved to adopt the Consent Calendar and Councilor Saager seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mayor Key announced this was the opportunity for citizens to approach the council with items not on the agenda. None approached.

NEW BUSINESS

CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL Library Building Use Policy. Library Director Bob Jones stated that in 1997, the Library Board adopted a Library Use Policy in anticipation of the new building. After finishing the new library this year, the policy was reviewed and a few revisions were made. Policies from a number of different libraries from all over the country were used as samples. The Library Board tentatively approved the policy presented before council this evening, but had concerns about the rental fees. Mr. Jones said he spoke with City Manager Delphine Palmer and revisions were then made in the rental fees.

Councilor Woods asked about room use limitations to non-profit organizations. A discussion ensued and Councilor Woods suggested this section of the policy be clarified.

Councilor Woods asked why groups with continuous meeting dates were discouraged from using the library facilities. Mr. Jones stated that if several groups booked the library meeting rooms, it wouldn't take long before the library would not have access to their own rooms for library business. City Manager Delphine Palmer stated that this very issue took place in Newport, Washington and literally, the rooms became unavailable to any city usage. Ms. Palmer also stated that the Chamber allows for planned meetings to take place at the Community Building. Councilor Kelley said she felt the fees would encourage professionals because clubs would not pay the rental fees. Councilor Saager asked who made the final decision with regard to refundable cleaning fees and how the rooms are left. Mr. Jones stated that initially it would be the library staff, but if a person contested that decision, they could appeal to the Library Board and eventually council if needed. Councilor Saager stated he did not want people coming to council suggesting they had been gouged. Assistant City Manager Linda Hall clarified that the City Manager would have final judgment of a contested situation after the individual or group had first gone to the Library Director. Councilor Saager said he would like that better and further stated that scratches and damages to furniture and fixtures had to be watched carefully.

Councilor Kelley moved to adopt the Library Use Policy. Councilor Lyon seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 1929 User Fee Schedule. City Manager Delphine Palmer said that in the past, the City had been very good to their citizens in not charging very many user fees. She further said that after obtaining information from other cities, our department heads not only updated our existing user fees, but also added a few. The theory behind user fees is that only the user pays them. The City nor its citizens are responsible for these fees unless use is evident. During these economic times even though we would like to offer free service or low fees, it is not economically prudent to do so.

Councilor Lyon asked if the parade permit was for the whole parade or for each individual entry. Ms. Palmer clarified saying the permit was for the sponsoring party. Councilor Lyon asked about the sound variance permit questioning whether people could be as loud as they wanted if they had a permit. Assistant City Manager Linda Hall said this was not a new permit and that with the permits, the sound has to be within certain decibel levels. Mayor Key asked about the dance permits and Councilor Kelley wanted to know if they were for the City's facilities. It was clarified as anyone having a dance needed a dance permit. Youth Representative Ben Colahan asked about the Video and Pin Ball Fees. Ms. Palmer said that even in the small city where she

had come from, the businesses had paid these fees for many years and never questioned them. In restaurants where pinball machines and/or video machines existed, the City would bill them annually. Mr. Colahan asked what the City offered for the fees. Ms. Palmer said she did not have the breakdown for him and also knew that many businesses would not be happy with this fee, but that she also knew the City needed revenue avenues and many cities have adopted this fee. Councilor Woods asked how the City planned to bill and obtain these fees. Ms. Palmer said the City had discussed this and the person she felt would be perfect for the job was our Code Enforcement Officer; however, this position was proposed to be eliminated. Yet, if a grant could be obtained to reinstate this position, this would be a perfect avenue to obtain these fees. Councilor Woods asked if the City would incur additional cost to collect a few fees. Ms. Palmer said that at any point the City would have to pay to obtain these fees, the City would not pursue. Ms. Palmer further explained, however, that from her experience, these fees would more than pay for one position to monitor these revenues. Councilor Woods continued with his discussion due to the difficulty in collecting the fees. Assistant City Manager Linda Hall said there were very fun and positive avenues to collect some of these fees. With the bicycles, in the past the Police Department has promoted Bicycle Rodeos where safety and skills have been taught. The police check for helmet fits and then encourage bicycle registration at that time. With dogs, it was discussed to have a "Prettiest Dog Show" and encourage registration at that time as well. Councilor Saager said that user fees are not new. He has to pay a user fee to play any tapes or radio stations in his store for his customers and that fee is \$150.00. Assistant City Manager Linda Hall said she felt it was not staff's intention to be user unfriendly amongst our citizens, but our City Manager Delphine Palmer is fighting very hard to save city services and if we don't find additional revenue sources soon, we will be forced to eliminate more services.

Councilor Kelley moved to adopt Resolution No. 1929 Implementing User Fees. Councilor Lyon seconded the motion which passed unanimously amongst council members. Youth Representative Ben Colahan, however, voted nay.

MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager Delphine Palmer did not have a report on this evening.

PRESENTATION to Ben Colahan. Assistant City Manager Linda Hall presented a graduation card and balloon bouquet and told Mr. Colahan how very proud they all were of him and his accomplishments. He was congratulated for his graduation with honors.

The open session meeting adjourned at 7:44pm to enter into executive session.

The Council returned to open session following two executive sessions at 8:20 p.m.

Councilor Kelley commented that she was very pleased with the job that City Manager Delphine Palmer had done with the negotiations of the new contract with J.P.'s On the Green. Councilor Saager concurred.

Councilor Kelley then moved to approve the updated contract between the City of Milton-Freewater and JP's On The Green. Councilor Saager seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Next the Council took action on a negotiated bargaining unit agreement with the Police Association. Councilor Kelley asked how many other bargaining unit agreements would be coming for negotiation between the time this agreement came to term and the present. City Manager Palmer replied the Department Head Unit, the Teamster Unit and the I.B.E.W. Electric Lineman agreement would all be expiring in the next two years.

Councilor Saager then moved to approve the Police Association contract, but to limit the contract time period to June 30, 2007. Councilor Kelley seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

The City Manager then reported she would like to give a brief update on some issues to the City Council.

She began by asking the Council if they wished to pursue the organization of a Farmer's and Crafter's Market to be hosted at Orchard Park. She explained that two of her staff members were excited about the prospect and she needed Council direction before committing City time and resources.

Councilor Kelley stated she believed that this was the Chamber's role. Councilor Saager agreed. Councilor Lyon commented that Curtis Walters had been, or perhaps still was, involved in organizing a Farmer's Market on Saturdays in the North business district, but it had not met with a tremendous amount of success.

It was the consensus of the Council that while they did not object to the Farmer's Market being held in Orchard Park, that it be chiefly organized by the Chamber, although it was alright if the City assisted. The extent of the assistance would be at the discretion of the City Manager.

Ms. Palmer further informed the Council that the job of planning and organizing the Christmas Party and Employee Picnic would now be shared and rotated among the departments at the City. In the past Assistant City Manager Linda Hall had done both these duties. The department in charge of this year's Christmas Party had asked if the party could be held at the Walla Walla Country Club. Ms. Palmer stated she had denied this request as she believed the money should be spent at local businesses. She asked Council for their input.

Councilor Saager stated he wholeheartedly agreed that the party should be held in Milton-Freewater. He added that he always hosted his employee party in Milton-Freewater and felt strongly that the money should support local businesses.

Councilor Kelley agreed, adding this was an important show of support from the City to local businesses.

Councilor Lyon stated he too agreed.

It was the consensus of the Council that the City Christmas Party be held inside the City limits of Milton-Freewater.